

# THE Nature Conservancy

## ARKANSAS FIELD OFFICE

January 31, 2000

Commander  
Memphis District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
ATTN: CEMVM-PM-E  
167 North Main Street, Room B-202  
Memphis, TN 38103-1894

Dear Sir:

Thank you for providing, a copy of the Eastern Arkansas Region Comprehensive Study (EARCS), Grand Prairie Area Demonstration Project, final main report and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

I refer you to my letter of September 18, 1998, in response to the EARCS, Grand Prairie Area Demonstration Project, Draft General Reevaluation Report and Draft Environmental Impact Statement, in which the outstanding natural resource values of the Arkansas Big Woods are described.

The Nature Conservancy continues to have concerns regarding the potential negative impacts of the Grand Prairie Area Demonstration Project, (and other irrigation and navigation projects) to the natural resources of the Arkansas Big Woods. The Nature Conservancy again strongly urges the Corps of Engineers to conduct a comprehensive study of this ecosystem, in partnership with other resource agencies and conservation interests. The environmental effects of the Grand Prairie Area Demonstration Project and other projects on the Big Woods cannot be evaluated without this comprehensive study of all irrigation projects, the White River navigation project, reservoir operations and other Corps and non-Corps projects.

Cumulative effects of development projects and reservoir operations include drying of wetlands, loss of aquatic fauna, loss of bottomland hardwoods, and seasonal changes in water temperature and hydrograph, as detailed in the above-referenced letter.

The new EIS section on Cumulative Impacts of Other Projects simply describes projects without addressing project interactions. It also does not address shifts in vegetation type, water temperature changes and seasonal changes in hydrology.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely



Nancy S. DeLamar  
Vice President and State Director  
Arkansas Field Office  
The Nature Conservancy